

# M+B

## title

### *The Thread of Art*

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By Anne R. Fabbri

At the Stanek Gallery, 242 N. 3rd St., you can enjoy the dual pleasures of viewing works by nine artists, past and present, and collaborating on a new sculpture project by Christine Stoughton, a contemporary artist represented in their current exhibition, *The Thread of Art*. She has provided the same materials she uses for her sculptures and invites visitors to the gallery to express their own personal aesthetic by adding to the ongoing construction. You will become part of the continuation of creative expression as celebrated by this exhibition.

According to the curator, Ross Lance Mitchell, artists from different generations adhere to a quality of creative expression valid throughout time. He has selected nine artists to demonstrate this thesis, three of whom are from earlier generations: Albert Goodspeed (1913 – 1982), Harry Sefarbi (1917 – 2001), and Tony Trezza (b. 1922). In addition, the show includes six contemporary artists, whose work spans the post-war period to the twenty-first century, providing an engrossing review from the Cubist-inspired marble sculpture by Trezza to the new visions of this century. Now in art anything goes, from found objects washed up on a beach to digital images of daily experience, all united by an underlying artistic aesthetic, always present, even with the urinal submitted by Marcel Duchamp to the New York Armory show in 1913. Duchamp declared a work of art is whatever the artist claims as such. It required almost a hundred years for that proclamation to be widely accepted. Now we can go from there to admitting that the old-fashioned craft of crochet can produce some of the most futuristic art in the exhibition, i.e., works by Caitlin McCormick of crocheted cotton string, glue and wire.



As curator, Mitchell emphasized expressive brushwork as a defining characteristic for painters from Goodspeed and Sefarbi to contemporary artist **Catherine Mulligan**. Goodspeed's abstract expressionist oil paintings on canvas recall the mid-twentieth century explosion of such work.

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They are fugues of subtle color contrasts that become more engaging the longer you pause and look. His Landscape with Lighthouse refers to a familiar theme while staying within his mode of expression. Sefarbi's mid-century works such as Dinner Party and Women Ironing – now an obsolete chore – define a time and place in history, the first half of the twentieth century. Impressionist-inspired paintings by **Catherine Mulligan**, such as Rainbow and Providence precede her Spring Still Life and Camden Grocery, which incorporate a unique photo transfer of her own handmade paper onto the oil brushwork paintings on masonite, adding an interesting complexity to a traditional medium. Both **Mulligan** and Christine Stoughton represent the twenty-first century mantra of creating art with found objects, accumulation of debris such as that washed up on a beach, installation, video plus digital. Stoughton's Connections of curly willow, wire and mixed media, 10' by 15", is suspended from the ceiling, creating a grace note in the middle of the gallery.

Mitchell has created an exhibition that demonstrates his far-reaching knowledge of the art movements that are still viable today. He has selected relevant works by modern and contemporary artists who deserve to be better known. The exhibition is on view until May 28. See it now and, while there, express your own creative impulse.